

9-25-1971

A. Stanley T. Fischer Letter

A. Stanley Fischer

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.snc.edu/audencorrespondence>

Recommended Citation

Fischer, A. Stanley, "A. Stanley T. Fischer Letter" (1971). *Dr. Boyer's Auden Correspondence*. 9.
<http://digitalcommons.snc.edu/audencorrespondence/9>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the The Dr. Boyer Lloyd Alexander and W.H. Auden Collections at Digital Commons @ St. Norbert College. It has been accepted for inclusion in Dr. Boyer's Auden Correspondence by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ St. Norbert College. For more information, please contact sarah.titus@snc.edu.

25. Sept. 1971

Dear Mr Boyer,

I do not think I can give you any appreciable help in your Auden thesis. There is no sign of any Anglo-Saxon influence on his poetry up to 1926, which is what I have ⁱⁿ a unique collection. After that date such traces as occur can be seen in his published work.

W.H.A. was obliged to waste his first year getting through 'science prelims'. Then the Oxford Eng. Lit. course obliged him to read some Anglo-Saxon & learn the language. As the Oxford examiners of our day were more keen on the language course (A-S, Middle English) than the literature, I do not think Auden learnt much AS, or he would have got a better degree.

There are obvious influences to be seen in some of his earliest published poems, especially the one beginning 'Which of you waking early & watching daybreak', but it soon lapsed into a general love of alliteration and the rather Hopkins-like sprung rhythm of A-S. poetry

Beowulf was disappointing ^{to him,} but later he was to discover the Icelandic Sagas and find them fascinating. The endless, heroic, but stupid feuds of Icelandic heroes clearly inspired much of Paid on both sides.

I was one year senior to WYSTAN Auden. We had rooms for a year on the same staircase. By the end of his second year he was already a literary lion and I seldom had a chance of much talk with him — which is why I feel that I can give you no further help than this poor scrap of information.

The earliest influences on his poetry were Thomas Hardy (v. strong), Edward Thomas, —and his father's medical books; Then T.S. Eliot's first book.

With all good wishes,

A Stanley T Fisher